



UNCLASSIFIED

## (U) **WORLDWIDE: Worldwide Threat to Shipping (WTS) Report** 27 February - 25 March 2020



26 March 2020

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#### 1. (U) Scope Note

1. (U) The Worldwide Threat to Shipping (WTS) message provides information on threats to merchant vessels, the shipping industry, and other maritime stakeholders worldwide in the last 30 days. This report is produced primarily to inform merchant mariners and naval forces.

#### 2. (U) Warnings and Advisories:

A. (U) **MARAD 2020-006-Global-Novel Coronavirus Outbreak, dated 15 March 2020.** Issue: Current info on COVID-19 for mariners and maritime commerce stakeholders is being published through USCG MSIBs, which are available within the 2020 drop down at <https://go.usa.gov/xdsP5>. This information will be updated as the situation warrants. Maritime industry questions about COVID-19 guidance and requirements should be communicated to [OutbreakQuestions@uscg.mil](mailto:OutbreakQuestions@uscg.mil), local USCG Captain of the Port (COTP) offices, or to a vessel's appropriate COTP for its next port of call. For more information about U.S. Maritime Alerts and Advisories, including subscription details, please visit <http://www.marad.dot.gov/MSCI>.

#### 3. (U) Summary:

A. (U) NIGERIA: On 25 March, an unidentified vessel suspiciously followed a merchant vessel 180 NM southwest of Brass.

B. (U) NIGERIA: On 25 March, pirates attacked a merchant vessel 79 NM southwest of Brass.

C. (U) GABON: On 22 March, pirates kidnapped seven crew members from the Portugal-flagged container ship MSC TALIA F approximately 62 NM west of Libreville.

D. (U) PHILIPPINES: On 22 March, a robber boarded a berthed product tanker in Batangas Port.

E. (U) GABON: On 21 March, pirates hijacked the passenger vessel ELOBEY 6 and kidnapped crew members.

F. (U) NIGERIA: On 19 March, a robber boarded a tanker 7 NM off Lagos.

G. (U) CAMEROON: On 19 March, eight pirates in a boat attacked a merchant vessel approximately 22 NM from Douala.

H. (U) BRAZIL: On 17 March, robbers boarded an anchored bulk carrier in Macapa Anchorage.

#### 4. (U) Details: Monthly Incidents by Region

(U) This section lists reports of active violence against shipping, credible threats to shipping, or the potential for a situation to develop into a direct threat to shipping over the last 30 days. Every effort is made to ensure that incidents are not double-counted. In the event double-counting is detected, or an incident is later found to be different than initially reported, an explanation of the cancellation of the inaccurate report will be made in at least one message prior to dropping the erroneous report.

##### A. (U) NORTH AMERICA:

1. (U) MEXICO: On 3 March, local fishermen attacked conservationists and Mexican federal inspectors on two identified NGO vessels in the upper Gulf of California Biosphere Reserve. The fishermen hurled Molotov cocktails and fishing net weights as the NGO vessels carried out surveillance operations. The inspectors and conservationists used anti-piracy tactics such as high-speed maneuvering and defensive water cannons to repel the attacks. A military officer onboard one of the vessels fired a warning shot, which caused the fishermen to stop their attack and disband. (Maritime Security Review).

##### B. (U) CENTRAL AMERICA - CARIBBEAN - SOUTH AMERICA:

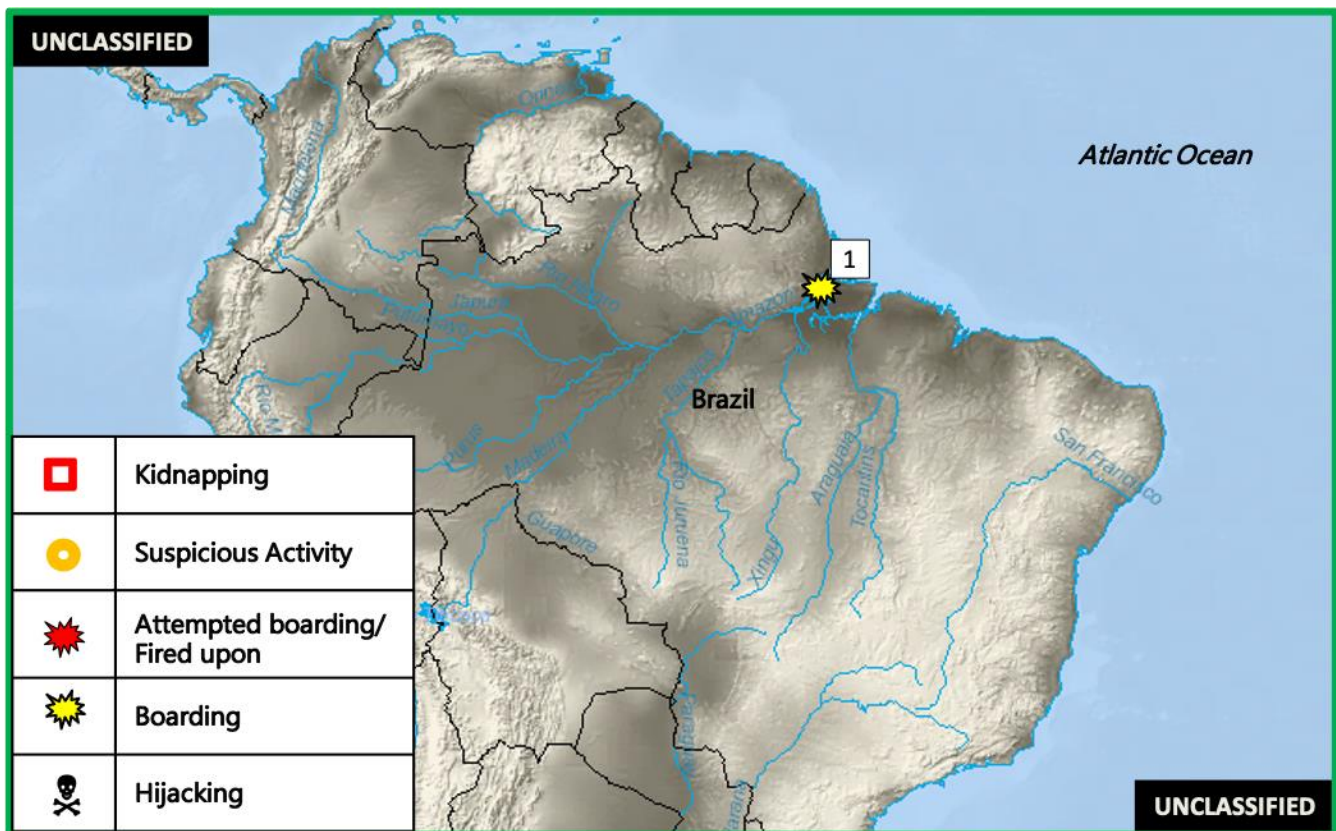


Figure 1. South America Piracy and Maritime Crime

1. (U) BRAZIL: On 17 March at approximately 0330 UTC, robbers boarded an anchored bulk carrier in Macapa Anchorage at 06:55N - 050:52W. A crewman on routine rounds noticed a small boat near the bow and notified the officer on watch (OOW). When the crewman went to investigate, he was taken hostage. The OOW noticed movement near the forecandle, was unable to reach the crewman on his walkie-talkie, and raised the alarm. The crew mustered to respond. The robbers subsequently fled with the crewman's walkie-talkie and ship's stores. (IMB)

2. (U) HAITI: On 8 March at 2040LT, robbers boarded the Singapore-flagged container ship TRINIDAD TRADER anchored at 18:34N - 072:24W approximately 3 NM from Port-au-Prince. The general alarm was sounded and the crew mustered in the accommodation area. The crew subsequently searched the vessel, but the robbers had fled with four mooring ropes and one metal wire with hook. The Port-au-Prince port control and Haiti Coast Guard were informed. (ReCAAP)

3. (U) PERU: On 1 March, duty crewmen on routine safety rounds onboard an anchored bulk carrier near position 12:01S - 077:12W, Callao Anchorage, noticed two small boats secured near the bow and three people climbing the anchor chain. The alarm was raised and all crew moved toward the forecandle. Seeing the alerted crew, the three people retreated and escaped in their boats. (IMB)

C. (U) **ATLANTIC OCEAN AREA:** No current incidents to report.

D. (U) **NORTHERN EUROPE - BALTIC:** No current incidents to report.

E. (U) **MEDITERRANEAN - BLACK SEA:** No current incidents to report.

F. (U) **WEST AFRICA:**

Figure 1. South America Piracy and Maritime Crime

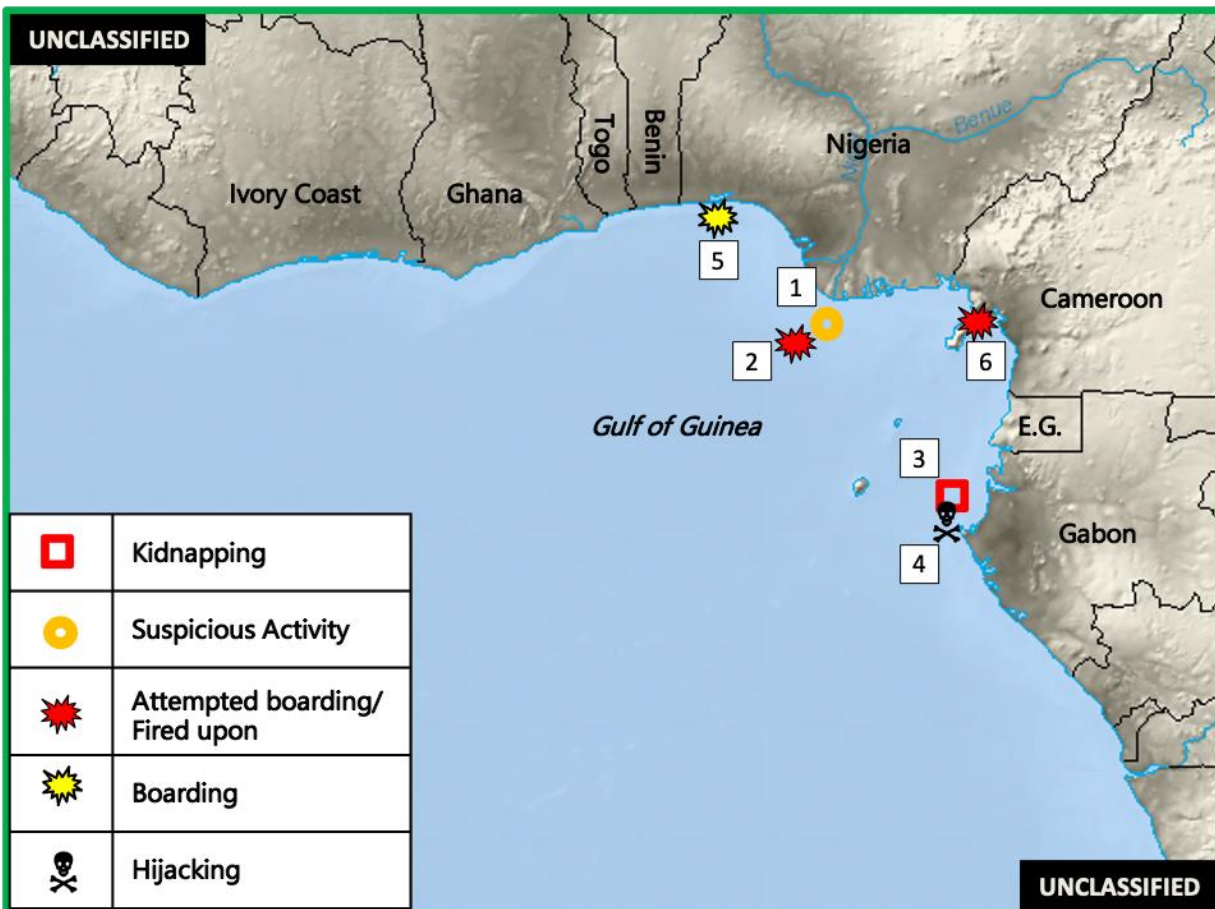


Figure 2. West Africa Piracy and Maritime Crime

1. (U) NIGERIA: On 25 March at 1630LT, an unidentified craft suspiciously followed a merchant vessel approximately 180 NM southwest of Brass at 02:27N - 004:01E. (MDAT-GoG)
2. (U) NIGERIA: On 25 March at 1005 UTC, seven pirates in a black speedboat attempted to board a bulk carrier in position 03:07N - 005:35E approximately 75 NM southwest of Brass Nigeria. Master activated SSAS alert, increased speed, and commenced evasive maneuvers which resulted in the pirates abandoning their attempt to board. (MDAT-GoG, IMB)
3. (U) GABON: On 22 March at 1115 UTC, pirates kidnapped seven Ukrainians from the Portugal-flagged container vessel MSC TALIA F approximately 62 NM west of Libreville at 00:33N - 008:25E. The remaining 10 crew members are believed to have taken refuge in the vessel's citadel. The vessel was transiting from Lomé, Togo, to Libreville at the time of boarding. (MDAT-GoG, Maritime Executive, Maritime Bulletin, IMB)
4. (U) GABON: On 21 March, pirates attacked and hijacked the Equatorial Guinea-flagged coastal RO-RO passenger vessel ELOBEY 6 approximately 22 NM from Port Gentil. Pirates forced the crew to sail to Nigerian waters and fled with three hostage crew members (2 Moroccans, 1 Equatorial Guinean) when approached by a Nigerian Navy vessel. The ELOBEY 6 was subsequently escorted to Equatorial Guinean waters. (Maritime Bulletin, Fleetmon)
5. (U) NIGERIA: On 19 March at 0045 UTC, a robber boarded a tanker 7 NM off Lagos at 06:18N - 003:21E. The robber fled with stolen cargo when a security team member fired warning shots and raised the alarm. A Nigerian Navy patrol boat was dispatched to investigate. (MDAT-GoG, IMB)
6. (U) CAMEROON: On 19 March at 2345 UTC, eight pirates in a boat attacked a merchant vessel approximately 22 NM from Douala at 03:40N - 009:25E. The pirates fled after exchanging fire with the security team. (MDAT-GoG)
7. (U) ANGOLA: On 15 March, two skiffs with four and six individuals onboard approached a supply vessel at anchorage 4 NM from Soyo at 06:04S - 009:25E. The alarm was raised and SSAS was activated. The skiffs subsequently changed their course and headed toward the Congo River. The port authorities were notified and a patrol boat was dispatched to the area. (MDAT-GoG)
8. (U) IVORY COAST: On 7 March at 0150 UTC, a robber in a canoe approached and boarded a tug boat while anchored at Abidjan Anchorage at 05:16N - 004:02W. The crew noticed the person onboard and raised the alarm. All crew was mustered and a security search was conducted. Port control was informed and a security boat was sent to the location. A mobile phone was reported as stolen from the vessel. (Maritime Security Review, IMB)
9. (U) BENIN: On 6 March, Greece's Shipping Ministry reported one Filipino crew was abducted on 5 March, when as many as six persons boarded tanker MINERVA VIRGO in position 05:36N - 002:20E, 45 NM south of Cotonou. The majority of the crew reached the citadel with one person unaccounted for. (Maritime Security Review)
10. (U) NIGERIA: On 6 March, six pirates boarded the Hong Kong-flagged general cargo vessel HUANGHAI GLORY approximately 85 NM south of Lagos. The pirates broke two glasses on the bridge and stole cash before disembarking. The crew sent an SSAS and hid in a cabin. (ReCAAP)
11. (U) TOGO: On 5 March at 0730 UTC, a skiff with as many as 10 persons approached product tanker STI BOSPHORUS at position 05:211N - 001:31E, 50 NM south of Lome. The tanker took evasive maneuvers, increased speed, and activated fire hoses. The skiff approached less than 1 NM from tanker before breaking off pursuit. (Maritime Security Review, IMB)
12. (U) ANGOLA: On 27 February, a skiff with eight persons and a ladder approached a merchant vessel at 08:10S - 012:41E, around 50 NM north-northwest of Luanda Port. The crew mustered in the citadel. CSO was notified, and the vessel undertook evasive maneuvers, after which the skiff aborted pursuit. The vessel and crew are safe. (MDAT-GoG)



**G. (U) ARABIAN GULF:** No current incidents to report.

**H. (U) INDIAN OCEAN - EAST AFRICA - RED SEA:**

1. (U) GULF OF ADEN: On 3 March, the crude oil tanker MONTE URBASA reported being approached by unmanned skiffs in position 14:02N - 052:35E. The vessel applied Best Management Practice measures and the skiffs broke away. While the existence of unmanned skiffs has been confirmed by pictures, the nature and intentions remain unknown. UPDATE on 6 March: The Saudi-led coalition has claimed they foiled an "imminent attack" on an oil tanker consisting of four unmanned, explosive-laden vessels. UPDATE on 9 March: UKMTO reported the incident occurred at approximately 1020 UTC and involved three small crafts, one of which was unmanned, likely remote-controlled, and approached to "extremely close quarters". (Maritime Security Review, UKMTO)

2. (U) GULF OF ADEN: On 3 March, a concentration of fishing vessels, some unmanned, were reported in the vicinity of 14:18N - 052:29E, near Point Bravo of the IRTC. (UKMTO)

3. (U) GULF OF OMAN: On 1 March, a merchant vessel reported a suspicious approach in position 24:43N - 057:38E. Two skiffs approached and circled the vessel. A coalition warship was in the vicinity, and upon its approach, the two skiffs departed. The vessel and crew are safe. (UKMTO)

**I. (U) EAST ASIA - SOUTHEAST ASIA:**

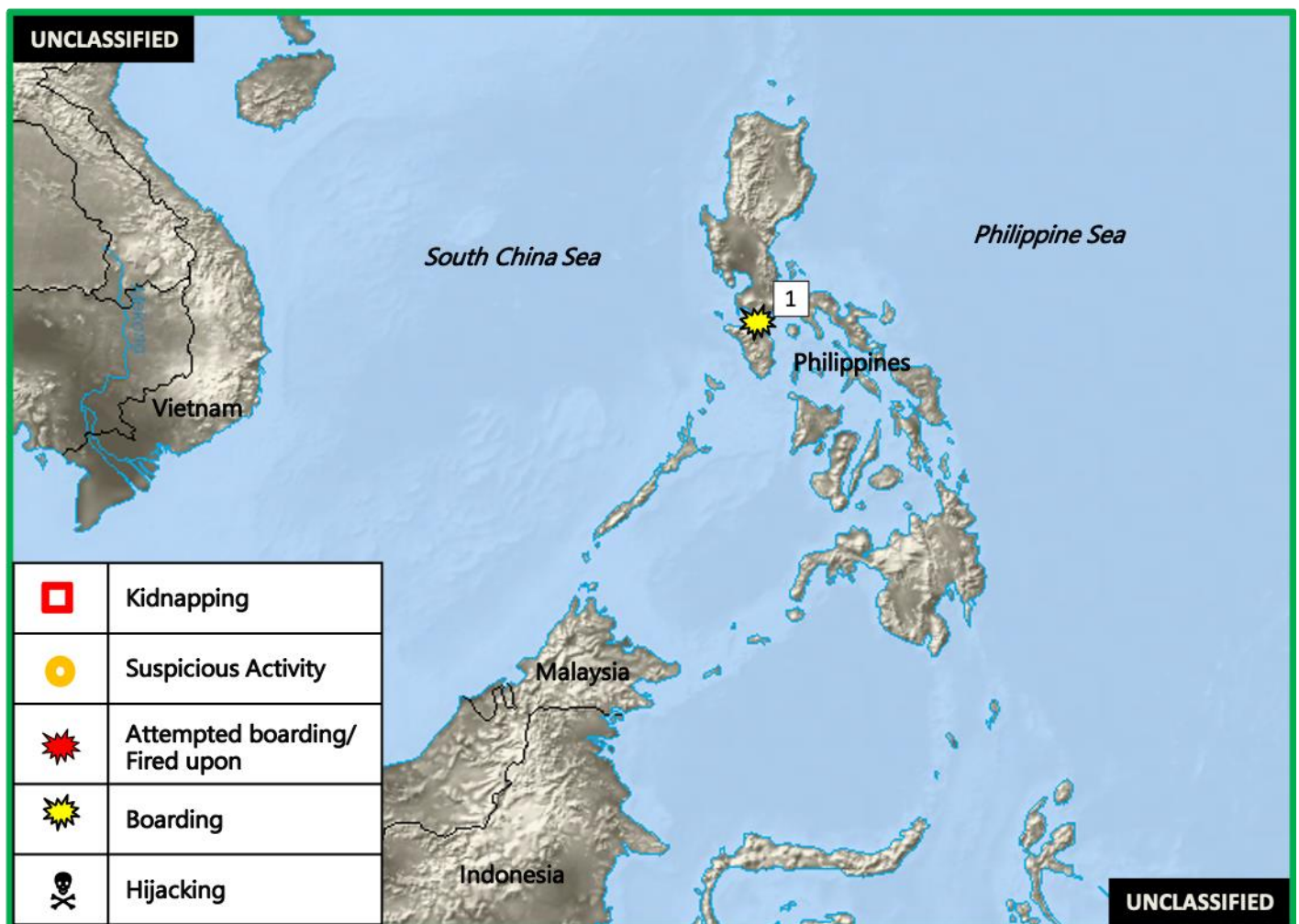


Figure 3. Southeast Asia Piracy and Maritime Crime

1. (U) PHILIPPINES: On 22 March in Batangas Port at 13:41N - 121:00E, a robber with a long knife boarded a berthed product tanker at the forecastle. When the crew raised the alarm, the robber fled. (IMB)

2. (U) INDONESIA: On 16 March at 0510LT, three robbers were caught in the engine workshop of the Liberia-flagged bulk carrier SAM JAGUAR which was underway east of Pulau Karimun Kecil in vicinity of 01:08N - 103:31E. The crew turned over the three apprehended robbers to the Indonesian Navy for prosecution. No one was injured during the incident. The Singapore Navy and Police Coast Guard were also notified of the incident. (IFC MARSEC Weekly)

3. (U) INDONESIA: On 13 March at 2020LT, robbers boarded the Singapore-flagged container ship KOTA ANGGERIK while anchored at Belawan anchorage. The watchman on the forecastle detected one robber opening the bolts of the hawse pipe. Upon seeing the watchman and hearing the whistle, the robber reentered the hawse pipe and fled in a wooden boat. A second robber was observed jumping into the water from the anchor chain. A subsequent search of the vessel revealed nothing was stolen. The ship's master tried calling port control, but there was no response. (IFC MARSEC Weekly)

4. (U) PHILIPPINES: On 12 March at 0500LT, two crew members spotted robbers at the forecastle of the Singapore-flagged tanker ENDEAVOUR II anchored in General Santos Harbor at 06:05N - 125:12E. The robbers fled upon hearing the ship's alarm. The crew searched the vessel and found a broken padlock to the bosun's stores, but nothing was stolen. Port control was notified. (ReCAAP, IFC MARSEC Weekly)

5. (U) INDONESIA: On 27 February at approximately 1630 UTC, four robbers boarded a bulk carrier underway in the Singapore Straits at 01:10N - 103:25E. When the duty lookout noticed the robbers near the accommodation block, the alarm was raised, crew mustered and the Singapore VTIS notified. Upon being detected the robbers fled. The Singapore Coast Guard boarded the vessel for inspection, but determined nothing was stolen. (IMB)

#### **J. INDIAN SUBCONTINENT:**

1. (U) BANGLADESH: On 6 March at 1430LT, robbers boarded the Singapore-flagged barge ANTARA KOH 18 in tow by the Indonesia-flagged tug CAPITOL T2001. At the time of the boarding, the tug and barge were anchored off Chittagong at 22:03N - 091:24E while a crane was being installed on the barge. The robbers stole the datalogger display and cut the safety system wiring. Batteries, diesel fuel, and hydraulic fluid were also stolen. The tugboat crew contacted a passing Coast Guard vessel via VHF. The Coast Guard subsequently took action to apprehend the robbers. (IFC MARSEC Weekly)

2. (U) INDIA: On 28 February at 0400LT, the master of offshore supply vessel MALAVIYA TEN, while anchored at Kakinada Anchorage, observed seven robbers board the ship from the stern. They stole oil lube drums and escaped. The crew reported the incident to the Kakinada Coast Guard who deployed two coast guard ships to search the fishing boats in the vicinity. (IMB, Maritime Security Review)

**L. (U) AUSTRALIA - NEW ZEALAND - PACIFIC OCEAN AREA:** No current incidents to report.

#### **5. (U) Appendix A: Further Contact Information and Resources**

(U) This appendix provides contact information for the author of the WTS as well as other entities that can be contacted with maritime crime reports. It also lists other resources where the WTS is posted and where piracy and maritime crime incident information can be found.

#### **(U) Contact**

(U) Originator of this WTS report requests consumer feedback. Originator will incorporate all anti-shipping events and violence against the maritime industry into this weekly message where appropriate. To aid in our reporting,

please add the Office of Naval Intelligence (ONI) to your normal corporate and organizational reporting requirements. The 24-hour watch can be reached at +1 (301) 669-4141.

## **(U) Other Resources**

(U) This Worldwide Threat to Shipping Report is posted at the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency's Maritime Safety site: <http://msi.nga.mil/NGAPortal/MSI.portal>. The International Maritime Bureau (IMB) also publishes a live piracy report based on reporting from the IMB Piracy Reporting Centre in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, listing all piracy and armed robbery incidents in the last ten days: <http://www.icc-ccs.org/>. The PAWW and WTS reports are posted weekly on the ONI Intel Portal: <https://www.oni.navy.mil/News/Shipping-Threat-Reports/>

## **6. (U) Appendix B: Terminology and Sourcing**

(U) This appendix is provided to promote consistent use of accurate terms of reference in reporting and also identifies those references that were used to gather the information contained in this report. ONI welcomes comment and suggestions for addition or amendment.

### **(U) Terminology**

(U) In order to promote consistent use of accurate terms of reference, the following have been adopted to describe the range of criminal anti-shipping activity and impediments to safe navigation in our worldwide reporting and analysis. Please note that these terms relate to observable activity and are independent of target vessel status and exclude actions by governmental powers in lawful pursuit of their authorities:

**(U) Attempted Boarding** – Close approach or hull-to-hull contact with report that boarding paraphernalia were employed or visible in the approaching boat.

**(U) Blocking** – Hampering safe navigation, docking, or undocking of a vessel as a means of protest.

**(U) Boarding** – Unauthorized embarkation of a vessel by persons not part of its complement without successfully taking control of the vessel.

**(U) Fired Upon** – Weapons discharged at or toward a vessel.

**(U) Hijacking** – Unauthorized seizure and retention of a vessel by persons not part of its complement.

**(U) Kidnapping** – Unauthorized forcible removal of persons belonging to the vessel from it.

**(U) Robbery** – Theft from a vessel or from persons aboard the vessel.

**(U) Suspicious Approach** – All other unexplained activity in close proximity of an unknown vessel.

### **(U) Sourcing**

(U) ONI derives information in this report from government agencies, piracy reporting centers, maritime security companies, and open press.

**(U) ICOD:** 25 March 2020

(U) The Weekly Threat to Shipping (WTS) reports are posted each week on the ONI Intel Portal and can be found at: <https://www.oni.navy.mil/News/Shipping-Threat-Reports/>